
Torch

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CEDARVILLE TORCH

A Magazine Ministry Of Cedarville College



**AND GOD'S
SUFFICIENCY**

Thank God For Pain!

by Dr. Paul Dixon
President, Cedarville College

War rages in the Middle East. At home we suffer. There is the suffering of separation from loved ones, family members, and friends. There is the suffering of the uncertainty as to whether the soldiers will return. There is the suffering of being informed officially that some will not be coming back--killed in combat--or of seeing the pictures of others as captives in Iraq.

Our college family has been sobered by the realities of battle. At least two thirds of us have a family member or friend over there. Our chapel has a Wall of Prayer dotted with over two thousand names that have been written there for prayer support.

Rabbi Harold Kushner in his book, *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*, relates the account of Daniel Patrick Moynihan when he learned that President John F. Kennedy had been shot. With tears running down his cheeks, he exclaimed, "When you are Irish, one thing you learn is that sooner or later this world will break your heart." You don't have to be Irish to know that--just human. Suffering is a part of life.

This issue of *Cedarville TORCH* is devoted to the theme of suffering. Our authors have shared testimonies and biblical principles to help all of us understand that Christians experience pain and tears. God has a purpose in it all.

In our daily chapels, when I have opportunity to speak, there are some fundamental biblical principles that I want our college family to grasp. A major emphasis is that we are to be a caring family. Our world, our churches, and our families need people who genuinely care when we hurt. The Apostle Paul taught the Corinthians in his second epistle, chapter 1 and verse 4, that the God of all comfort "comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God."

Those who have suffered have the opportunity and ability to be used of God

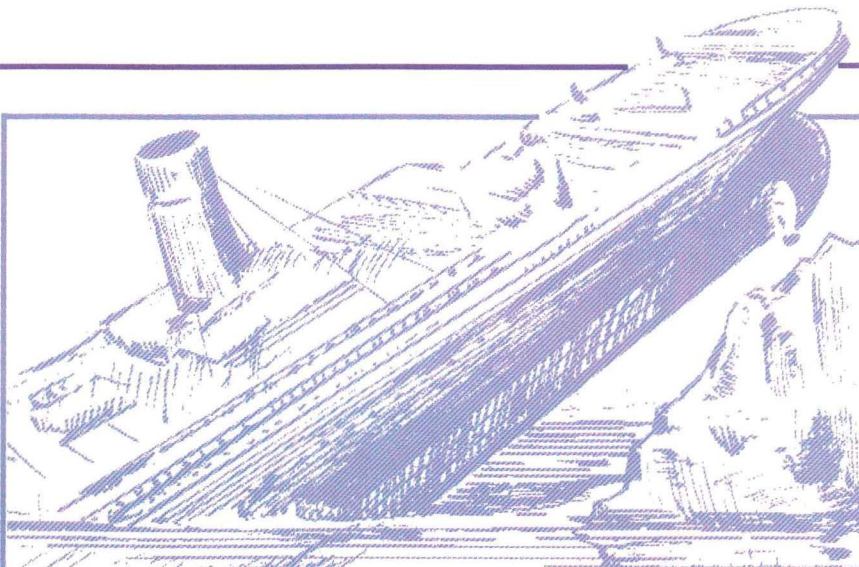


"I have told our alumni and students that if they ever have a need the rest of their lives to call me collect, any time, any place. They do."

to help those who hurt in the same way. We must be transparent in our suffering. The parents whose wayward son has broken their hearts can be used most effectively with another mother and father who are going down that same bumpy path. The person who has stood by the casket and felt such deep loss and loneliness has unending opportunities for ministry. When we face cancer or

heart bypass surgery, we want to talk to someone who has been there and knows the physical and emotional suffering.

Thomas Jefferson said, "The art of life is the avoiding of pain." Wrong! Dr. Paul Brand, one of the world's greatest hand surgeons and experts on leprosy, said, "Thank God for pain!" Right on! It is only as we hurt that we can help a suffering world.



THE UNSINKABLE SHIP

The Irish church was packed. In the audience new widows and orphans were sobbing. That week sixteen members of the Belfast church, all skilled mechanics, had gone down with the ocean liner TITANIC.

The city had never experienced such grief as that which came with the loss of the great ship and 1,052 souls. So deep was the grief that strong men, when they met in the streets, grasped each other's hands, and burst into tears.

TITANIC had been built in Belfast, and there was great local pride over the mighty ship, heralded as the largest and most luxurious of her time. Some had claimed her to be "unsinkable."

A visiting American minister had been asked to preach to the mourners. He announced the title of his message: "The Unsinkable Ship." He spoke about another vessel--the frail boat on the sea of Galilee--and it was unsinkable because Jesus, the Master of land and sea, was on board (Mark 4:35-41).

As the people heard about this boat and its Captain, they were comforted to learn that Jesus sympathizes with all who experience the storms of life. The Bible says, "For we do not have a High Priest Who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have One Who has been tempted [tested] in every way, just as we are--yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need" (Hebrews 4:15,16).

Is Jesus the Captain of your soul? He is, if you have received Him as your personal Lord and Savior. Then, when the waves get steep, He is able to guide you through any storm.

If He is not yet your Captain, you can ask Him today to take the helm of your life. "That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with the heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved" (Romans 10:9,10).

If you wish to talk with someone about a spiritual need, contact Dr. Harold Green, Vice President for Christian Ministries, Cedarville College, P.O. Box 601, Cedarville, OH 45314-0601, 513-766-2211.

CONTENTS

The Nature Of Trials

by Carl Ruby

4

The Christian's Response To Suffering

by Carl Ruby

6

Confidence To Cry

by Joni Eareckson Tada

9

Help In Time Of Need

by David Slusher

10

Heartstring To Heaven

by Rebekah Coriell

12

Campus News

15

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The Nature Of Trials

by Carl Ruby

I remember all too clearly my first significant encounter with suffering. While a sophomore at Cedarville College, I received news that my father had an illness which seemed to threaten the very existence of our closely knit family. As the reality of what was happening settled in, I was overwhelmed with a wave of confusion, desperation, and despair. My world, which once seemed so stable, so secure, now seemed incredibly vulnerable.

That was the first of several difficult trials which have forced me to grapple with the issue of human suffering. As I looked to the Scriptures for answers, certain themes began to emerge.

Much of what I learned about suffering came from the pages of I Peter, a book from a man who knew what it was to suffer and written to a group of people going through tremendous persecution.

As Peter comforted those he addressed, he began to spell out the nature of human suffering.

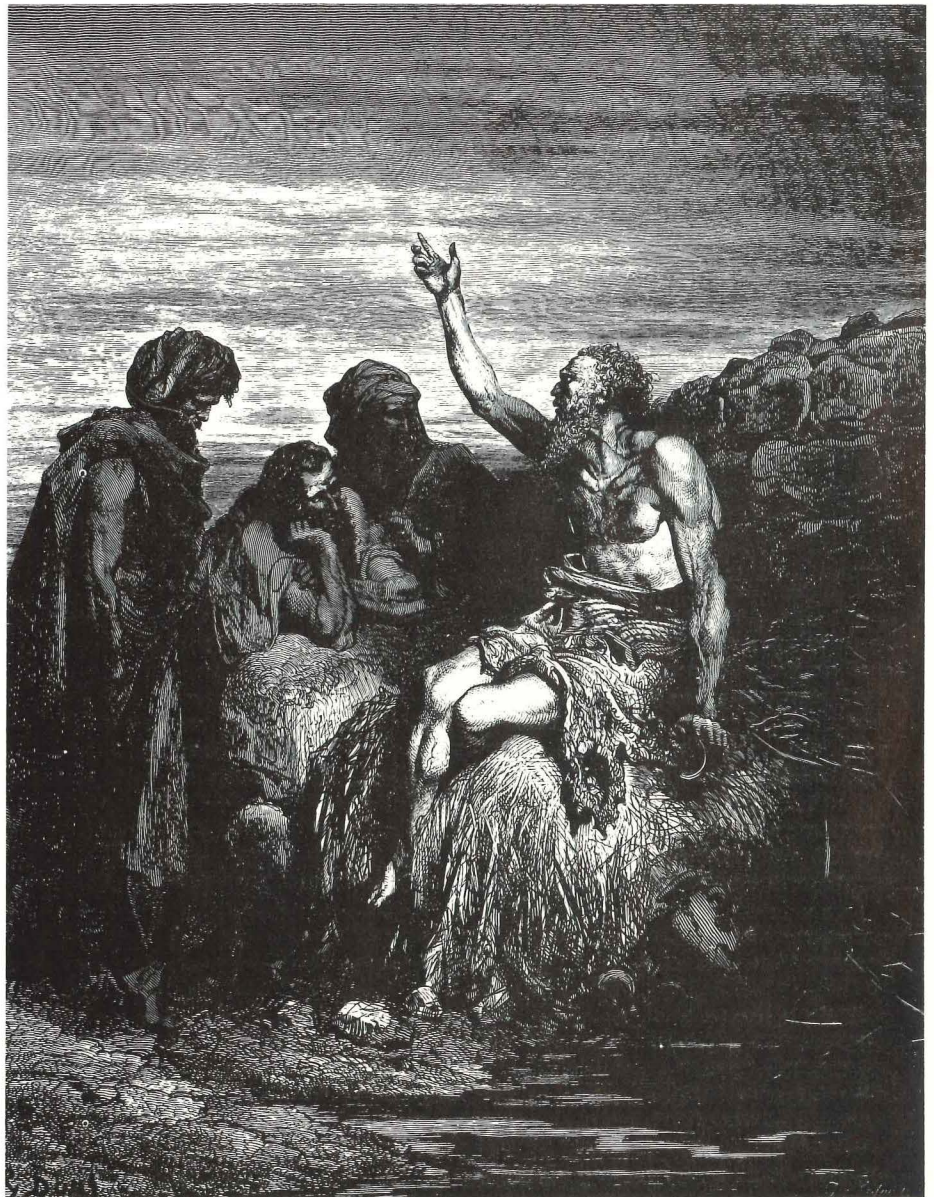
■ Trials are temporary.

Peter compared our trials to the passing seasons (1:6: "...now for a season"). Having grown up in Michigan, I know a bit about what it is like to wait through a miserable season. Trials, like a cold winter or long rainy spells, seem as though they may go on forever. But, eventually, the sun breaks through and the season of suffering passes.

This is not to say that some trials don't last a long time. I know of individuals whose suffering will probably stay with them for the remainder of this lifetime. But for the Christian who measures this existence in terms of eternity, even lifelong trials are like vapors that appear for a few moments and then vanish. We can survive suffering by keeping its brevity in focus.

■ Trials are necessary.

Suffering may seem without purpose, but Peter's message to us is that there is a necessity behind our pain--we suffer "...if necessary" (1:6). Suffering accomplishes things in our lives that no



Job And His Friends.

"Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble..." (Job 14:1).

other experience could produce.

When life goes well, we seldom grow. Our faith atrophies because we are not forced to use it. Trials bring us to our knees and force us to take our Bibles off the shelf. The athlete says, "No pain, no gain." The biggest gains in my spiritual life have been made during times of the greatest pain.

■ Trials come in many forms.

The KJV calls them manifold temptations. The NIV simply states that we suffer grief in all kinds of trials (1:6). My experience is that suffering comes in both dull aches and crushing blows. Dull aches are long wearisome burdens like unwanted singleness; dry, withered marriages; struggles with humiliating sins; and longing for

children when none are conceived.

Crushing blows, on the other hand, are sudden, unsuspected, and catastrophic. They include losing a loved one to the recklessness of a drunk driver, learning that one has cancer, or perhaps learning of a spouse's unfaithfulness. Both dull aches and crushing blows can steal the breath from our souls and drain the vitality from our lives.

It is a mistake to assume that all trials look alike. They run the gamut from personal illness and problems in relationships to persecution for religious beliefs. We must be sensitive to people whose trials are different than our own, to single parents, the handicapped, those struggling with infertility, and those with AIDS.

We must also be honest about our own suffering. Just as it is possible to overestimate our hardships, it is possible to underestimate or even deny our pain. Many Christians refuse to give themselves permission to hurt. They glibly deny their suffering out of a misconception that Christians always are to be happy. Paul shatters this myth in Romans 8:22-28, in which he informs us that groaning is a natural part of the Christian life.

■ Trials are to be expected.

In I Peter 4:12, Peter warns, "...do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you...." Trials and suffering are the norm, not the exception. We should expect to suffer because we live in a world grossly defiled by sin. Larry Crabb has accurately observed, "God designed us for a garden without weeds, relationships without friction, and fellowship without distance. But something is wrong...both within our world and within ourselves."¹

Those who purvey a prosperity gospel in which coming to Christ supposedly guarantees health, wealth, and perpetual happiness have failed to teach the whole counsel of God's Word. The reality is that we can anticipate times of suffering, no matter how disciplined we are in our pursuit of holiness.

■ Trials are valuable.

The value of suffering lies in its ability to develop our faith. First Peter 1:7 states, "These have come so that your faith--of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire--may be proved genuine and result in praise, honor, and glory when Jesus Christ is revealed." Genuine faith is more valuable than gold because it cannot be lost or taken away.

For me, faith involves coming to God with all my confusion and saying, "God,

I have no idea why You are allowing these trials to affect my family, but I do know that You are in complete control and that You love me. I know that You are a gentle and compassionate Father Who is able to bring good results out of bad circumstances."

This leads very naturally to a final point.

■ Trials are controlled.

He is an active agent in all our trials. Even trials resulting from our own sin are controlled by God. There are limits as to how much God will allow us to suffer. There have been times in my life when I have felt that God tested or surpassed that limit. But as I look back, those were the times when God stretched me the most, preparing me for the other trials to come along later.

Job's trials illustrate this principle. God was always there, setting strict limits on what Satan could or could not do to Job. Satan intended to destroy Job with suffering, but God outwitted him, using Satan's trials to deepen Job's faith. Interestingly, Job used the same analogy in Job 23:10 that Peter used in I Peter 1:7. He compared suffering to the refining process that takes place with gold. Job confidently asserted, "But He knows the way that I take; when He has tested me, I will come forth as gold."

Suffering is like going through the furnace that refines gold, burning off the dross and impurities. We are refined by suffering, our imperfections are melted away, leaving us more valuable and pure. As trials come into our lives, God controls the thermostat, never allowing the heat to become so severe that it destroys us. He sets the temperature at just the right level so that His purpose is accomplished.

Are you suffering? Is your faith being put to the ultimate test? When it seems that life hurts so much that you can't continue, you can find comfort by understanding the very nature of suffering. It is temporary. It is necessary and valuable. It comes in many forms, and can be expected to touch each life eventually. And, most of all, it is under complete control of a loving and compassionate God.

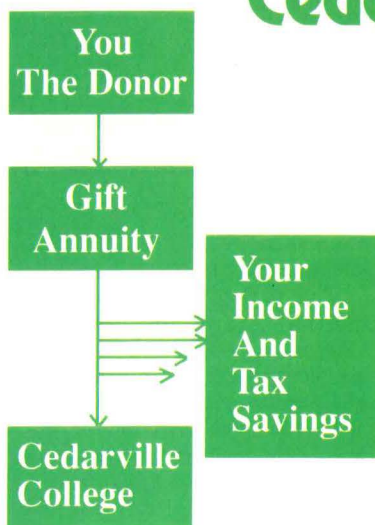
¹*Inside Out*, by Larry Crabb. NavPress, 1988.



Carl Ruby is a counselor and adjunct instructor of psychology at Cedarville College. He also assists a fellow faculty member in a private counseling practice. A 1983 Cedarville graduate, he earned a master's degree in clinical psychology at Wheaton College.

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The Christian Response To



Nothing in my formal training as a counselor prepared me for the emotions that I experience as I sit in my office each day hearing the stories of people who are going through tremendous suffering. During my first year in this profession, I was nearly overwhelmed by the magnitude of human suffering: the grief that accompanies a loved one's suicide, the haunting memory of sexual abuse, the agony of wrestling with one's own

sin. I saw firsthand the devastation that sin has wrought in our world.

The two questions that seem foremost in people's minds are, "Why does God allow people to hurt?" and "How are we to survive?" Fortunately, God, in His wisdom and compassion, has answered these questions in the Scriptures. His answers may not be as specific as we would sometimes like, but they are completely sufficient to guide us.

My search through the Scriptures for answers to these questions began during

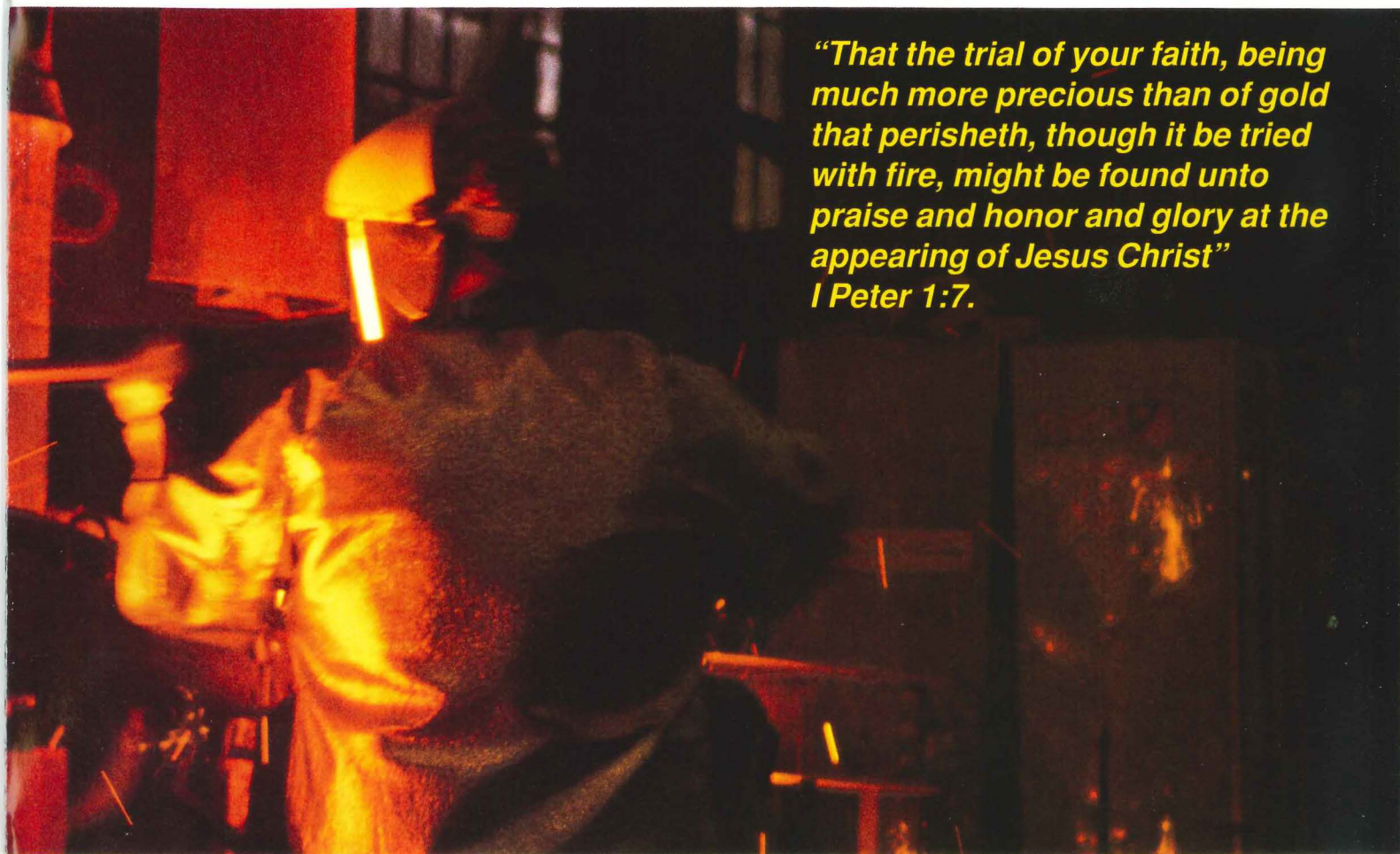
a time of suffering in my own life when I was a student at Cedarville College. I diligently looked up every verse I could find on human suffering and began the arduous task of memorizing each one. As I mulled these verses over in my mind, certain themes began to emerge. God taught me some of the specific reasons why suffering occurs, and in the Scriptures I found instruction as to how I should respond.

■ Suffering builds character.

Romans 5:3-5 tells us that we can rejoice in our suffering because it will strengthen our

's Suffering

by Carl Ruby



***"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ"**
1 Peter 1:7.*

character and leave us with hope. The progression that occurs in this passage is worth noting. Suffering--perseverance--character--hope. We live in a fast-paced world and want immediate solutions to our problems. Sometimes I'm simply unable to provide quick solutions for the clients who enter my office. Hope is available, but sometimes it's at the end of a rather long and bumpy road.

So we must first learn to persevere, to bear up under a heavy load, to keep going when every fiber of our being

cries out, "Give up." Perseverance is hard work and submission all rolled up into one.

Perseverance doesn't have a lot of glamour. It's not a very exciting character quality. Never have I had a client walk into my office saying, "Help me. I would really like to learn to persevere." Yet, it is in the soil of perseverance that character best grows.

The more we demand immediate answers and instant relief, the less we are able to let the process of suffering do its work and the less we are able to hope.

■ Suffering deepens our appreciation for God's Word.

The psalmist wisely reflected, "Before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now I obey Your Word....It was good for me to be afflicted, so that I might learn Your decrees" (Psalm 119:67,71). God's Word takes on new meaning when we are forced to cling to it.

I remember all too clearly how our hopes were dashed the evening of my wife's miscarriage. This first child had been long awaited. That night, after crying, praying, and failing to sleep, I took my

Bible and read these words: "What then shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us. He Who did not spare His own Son, but gave Him up for us all--how will He not also...graciously give us all things" (Romans 8:31,32). Today I will go home and enjoy a precious little daughter, but that night I found hope in God's Word. Words that I had read countless times before took on new meaning when I read them in the context of personal suffering.

■ Suffering is a catalyst toward righteousness.

Scripture never promises that the road to holiness is smooth and level. The author of Hebrews truthfully acknowledged, "No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who are trained by it" (Hebrews 12:11).

Suffering orders our priorities. It has a way of reminding us of what is truly important in this life. Suffering nurtures righteousness, and in righteousness we find peace.

■ Suffering enhances our ability to encourage others.

Paul outlined this principle in 2 Corinthians 1:3,4: "Praise be to... the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, Who comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God."

My heart is immediately touched when I hear of a young couple who experience a miscarriage. I understand. I have survived such a hurt. God has comforted me, and now I have the ability and, dare I say, the responsibility to share that comfort with others.

Understanding why we have suffered may lighten the load, but God's Word goes even further. There are specific instructions on how to cope with trials -- survival training for sufferers, so to speak.

■ Suffering should signal us to rejoice.

Like much of God's wisdom, His advice seems paradoxical at first. In James 1:2-4, we read, "Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature, complete." Likewise, Peter has instructed us to rejoice when we suffer (I Peter 1:6). In each passage we find the subtle suggestion that our focus is

not to be on the suffering itself, but rather on what suffering can accomplish in our lives. Suffering has made me more patient, more understanding, and more cognizant of my need to rely on God. Suffering has deepened my knowledge of God and taught me to value my salvation.

■ Suffering reaps eternal benefits.

Suffering has a way of wearing us down, leaving us in a state of fatigue and exhaustion. We find it very difficult to see beyond our immediate struggles. Paul identified with this struggle and wisely advised, "...do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary but what is unseen is eternal" (2 Corinthians 4:16-18). Temporary pain reaps eternal benefits.

We must resist the tendency to bring a Pearl Harbor perspective to our pain. If someone were to write a history of World War II with his only vantage point having been the docks and airfields of Pearl Harbor, his conclusion would obviously be that the U.S. went down in a resounding defeat. Such is the case as we view our own human suffering. If our only viewpoint is the here and now, our suffering will appear overwhelming, and our God uncaring. How untrue. All suffering, for the Christian, is temporary. I am convinced that the only way to make sense of human pain is to view it with a perspective mindful of eternity.

■ Suffering permits us to ask "Why?"

It is essential that we honestly communicate our needs to God. We must pour out our fears and confusion, casting all our anxiety on Him because He cares for us. Dare to pray the "why" prayers: "God, why are You allowing this? Why must we suffer so?"

In Romans 8, Paul alluded to hurts that make it difficult to pray. At those times, all we can do is groan, and the Holy Spirit intercedes on our behalf, translating our groans into eloquent prayers.

■ Suffering should motivate us to submit and to serve.

First Peter 4:19 states, "...those who suffer according to God's will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good." It is in a drowning person's best interest not to wrestle with the person who is attempting

to pull him to shore. Submission saves his life. Suffering saints must likewise submit to God, Who has our best interest at heart.

Suffering is not an excuse to sit out the game of life. God doesn't need bench warmers. We are to do good even when we hurt.

Several years ago we watched in awe as an Olympic gymnast with multiple broken bones continued to perform. Sheer determination and perhaps a drive for personal or national glory kept him going. With equal determination and a desire to glorify our God, we must keep on serving even when we hurt. Perhaps it is then that our testimony shines its brightest.

Trials are to perfect and to posture us. They perfect us like fire perfects gold, burning off the impurities so that we more clearly reflect God's image. They posture us by bringing us to our knees and drawing us into our loving Father's arms.

Perhaps the most fitting conclusion to a discussion of human suffering is found in the book of Hebrews: "Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith, Who for the joy set before Him endured the cross.... Consider Him Who endured such treatment from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart" (Hebrews 12:2,3).



CHINA AND HONG KONG

TORCH readers: See the sights and contact the cultures of China and Hong Kong. Investigate the ancient civilization that brought to the world paper, printing, gun powder, and rockets. Marvel at the ancient architecture, the breathtaking landscapes, and the intriguing people of China.

Myron Youngman, a teacher in China for six years and architect of the exchange program between Peoples' University in Beijing and Cedarville College, will lead a two-week, deluxe tour at reasonable rates beginning in late June. For more information contact:

Myron Youngman
Office of Development
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Confidence To Cry

by Joni Eareckson Tada

*From the book **Glorious Intruder** by Joni Eareckson Tada, copyright 1989 by Joni Eareckson Tada. Published by Multnomah Press, Portland, Oregon 97266. Chapter title "Tears" has been changed to "Confidence To Cry." Used by permission.*

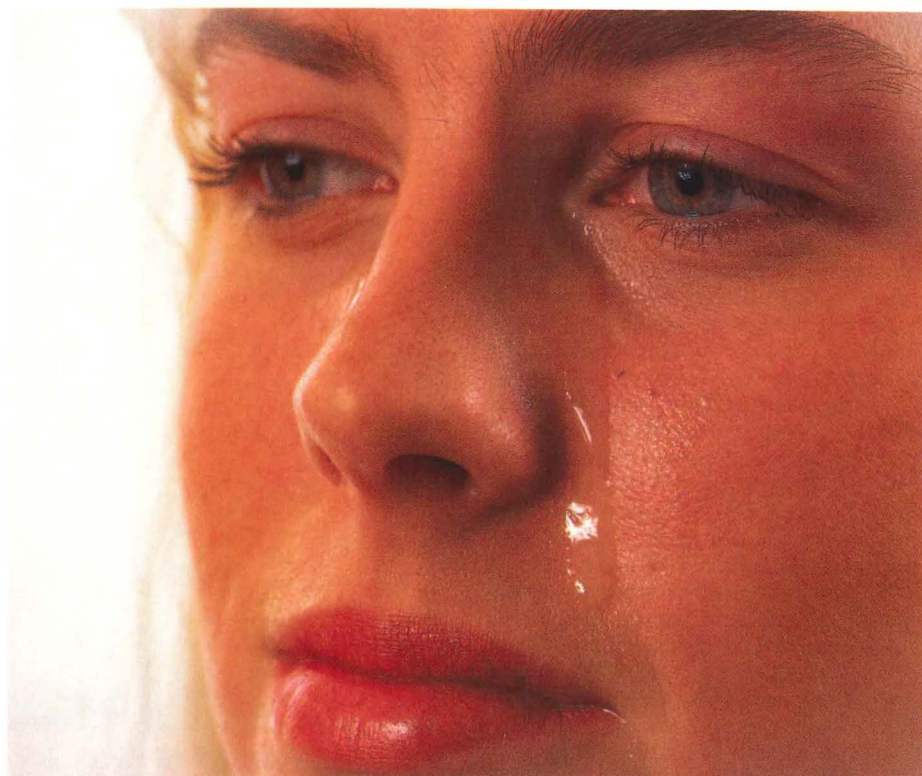
Years ago when I was in the hospital, I noticed something very peculiar. Even though there was so much pain, so much disappointment in the lives of kids my age who were rehabilitating from accidents and injuries—even though you *knew* they were hurting—no one cried.

Sometimes I would lie awake in the middle of the night in my hospital room. I was so near tears, but I fought them back. For one thing, there was no one around to blow my nose and wipe my eyes. But I was also afraid. Afraid I would wake up my roommates and they would hear me. Maybe, just maybe, they would make fun of me the next day at physical therapy. So I kept my tears to myself.

That reminds me of something Chuck Colson once told me. "Men and women in prison don't cry," he said. "It's a sign of weakness, and weakness can be dangerous in prison."

Thankfully, things changed once I got out of that hospital and got my act together with the Lord. Getting closer to Jesus taught me weakness was something to *boast* in, something to delight in. Even the apostle Paul, who told us he gloried in his weakness, wrote to the Corinthian church with "much anguish of heart and many tears."

Then I learned about David—a real man's man, a warrior, and a king. He cried, too. The pages of the Psalms are salted with this man's tears. In Hebrews I read of Jesus offering prayers and petitions "with loud cries and tears."



Big, burly Peter demonstrated that tears are only natural when one feels remorse or regret, like the time he heard the rooster crow the second time, recognized his sin, and wept bitterly.

Learning about these people in Scripture gave me the courage and confidence to cry! No longer were tears an embarrassment, a mark of weakness or shame.

What do your tears mean to you? The Bible tells us that "those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy" (Psalm 126:5). God gives you a reason to hope, even though you find it tough to hold back the tears. Weeping won't last forever. But out of your tears of grief, love, or repentance, God brings a peace that *does* last forever.

Revelation 7:17 puts it this way: "For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes."

It's ironic. In heaven, where I will be able once again to wipe my own tears, I won't have to.



Joni Eareckson Tada became a quadriplegic following a diving accident when she was 17. She is an author as well as founder and president of **Joni and Friends**, a ministry of encouragement to the disabled.

Help In Time Of

When I was two years old, my sister spent nine months in a hospital while she recovered from serious burns. Through my sister's tragedy, a number of people in my family, including my mom and dad, were saved, and later others received Jesus as their personal Savior.

All my life, my parents reminded me of how God worked through my sister's suffering. Though she is scarred on much of her body, she is very grateful to God for using her to accomplish His plan in the lives of my family and others. What I did not realize is how this experience helped prepare me to trust God for the suffering that I personally would endure later.

Three years ago I began to have dizzy sensations. They lasted two to three seconds and occurred about three times each day. I put off getting medical help. I was raised on the farm, and you just did not go to the doctor unless you had a serious accident. One day my wife, Jane, asked me to check with the doctor to find the cause, so I did.

My doctor recommended a CAT scan. Three days later he called me in a panic mode and said, "Come see me immediately."

When I arrived he gave me the news that I had a tumor larger than a golf ball in the middle of my head. I recall thinking, "There's no quick way out of this one, Dave."

When I arrived home and shared this news with my wife, we cried together and prayed and asked God to use us no matter what happened, because we truly wanted Him to receive glory and honor.

We called our friends and they responded wonderfully. As the word spread, our phone rang off the hook. Friends from college and seminary called from all over the country to offer us the assurance of their prayers. Specialists I did not even know offered me advice about what to do and where to go for the best help.

One doctor who was a close friend of a close friend told me, "David, I've checked around the country, and the



name of one man from the Cleveland Clinic keeps coming up. So I made an appointment for you."

When I called the office of this specialist who was so highly recommended, the secretary said, "Sir, I don't know how you got an appointment on the doctor's schedule. He has over 300 patients waiting to see him. But he will see you at 8:30 tomorrow morning."

My wife and I knew how we got in to see this man. God responded to the prayers of a host of our friends and sent us "help in time of need."

The next morning as we were about to walk out the door, my three-year-old son asked me if he could sing a song to me. His song was called, "Keep Your Eyes On God." He had made it up just for me. I don't think he has sung it since. My precious little son was used of God to "help in time of need."

Then he asked me if he could pray for me. This is what he prayed, "Dear God, please help the nurses to be good to Daddy and please help the doctors to use the right needle!" If I had known then that I would soon begin the first of hundreds of shots and 18 spinal taps, I would have shouted, "AMEN, and keep praying, Son!"

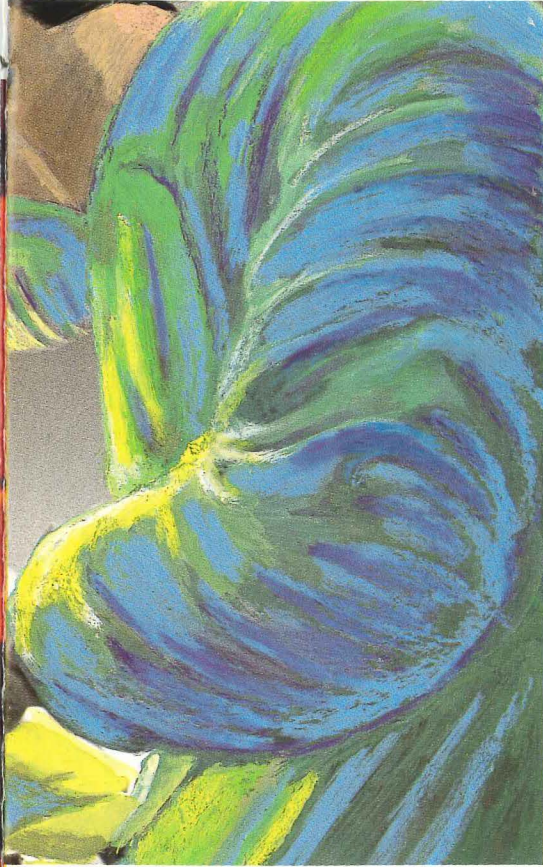
Then he closed his prayer with, "God, please bring my Daddy home soon because I need my Daddy and I love him."

Boy, that was hard! But how beautiful it was to know the Lord had prepared his heart for this time of trial for all of us.

The specialist informed me that my tumor was the largest of its type he had ever seen or even heard of. Furthermore, this was the second most difficult operation known and would

Need

by David Slusher



take 13 hours. He literally would have to pick up my brain and work under it for all that time. Chances were high that I would lose my eyesight and ability to walk. There was a 40% probability that I would be paralyzed.

I like what Andrew Murray says about prayer: "What is the most vital thing in prayer? That I catch the ear of Him to Whom I speak."

I know that God heard and responded to the many prayers of those who loved us enough to plead with the Creator of my body for its healing.

I love what the writer of Hebrews says in chapter 4:14-16: "Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, Who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest Who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points

tempted [tried] as we are, yet without sin." Here is the key verse, "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

I praise the Lord that my children were cared for in a wonderful way. Jane's parents and another beautiful couple offered to take care of them. This was another occasion where God sent "help in time of need" which relieved our minds tremendously.

People are so well meaning with their comfort. My wife gratefully heard many mini-sermons on the grace of God and how all things work together. The best one, and perhaps the briefest, came from my college golf coach, Dr. Allen Monroe. He put his arm around Jane and, with tears in his eyes, said, "God is good, God is good."

The doctor reported that the operation went well, but unfortunately he had to cut my third nerve resulting in loss of the use of my right eye. Someone told me later, "Well, praise the Lord, at least you have another eye." "Thanks for the tip," I thought. He meant well, I am sure, but words of "comfort" like those really don't work.

When spinal fluid began to drip out of my nose, I had to go back for more surgery.

The neurology floor of a hospital is a terrific place to see life as it really is, the suffering part, that is. If you spend much time there and have any feelings at all for people, you will never be the same. You walk by doors where folks cry out in pain. Some cry out of loneliness. God gave me numerous opportunities to share His love and comfort. I am thankful for that.

There were more surgeries. On one occasion I roomed with an 84-year-old man who had won a world championship coon hunt. Because I had trapped and hunted coon all my life, we had a terrific time swapping coon stories, and the Lord used them to build a bridge into this man's life. I developed spinal meningitis and had to stay an extra 28 days. During that time I shared the Gospel with him, and he trusted Christ.

The doctor kept telling me I was a miracle. Sure I was. But little did I know how great a miracle until he started inquiring about my family.

First, he would not believe that I even had children. When Jane assured him that we did, he replied, "Then, they are adopted, of course." We set him straight on that, but he still shook his head. "There is no way in this world that you can have children. There is not one male hormone in your body. I feel confident that you have had this tumor from birth," he told us. In fact, he said

my tumor was of the type that produced female hormones. There was just no way he knew of that would allow me to have a family naturally. Hmmm. It sure was beautiful to know that God superintended and answered our prayers for children. God is good and wonderful to trust.

I sometimes hear students at the seminary where I teach praise the Lord when they get a "mailbox miracle"--that is, when unexpected money arrives anonymously. They exclaim, "God is so good to me," as though He is good only when things are going well. I want them to know that God is good even if He cripples them for life.

A good God does only good to the people He dearly loves. We need to understand that and sew it into the fabric of our thinking. Sure, His trials for us may hurt, cause us to grieve beyond what we think we can stand, and may even result in our death. But, He is good and always gives us grace that is sufficient!

The Apostle Paul understood this. In 2 Corinthians 12:9,10 he states, "...Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities [incredible statement], in reproaches [amazing], in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses [wow] for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then I am strong."

It was God's sovereign plan all along for my wife and me to suffer. That is how He chose to glorify Himself through us, and it was a beautiful experience to trust God through it.

What about you, friend? Do you have any rivers that you think are uncrossable? God's love can bridge ANY river. ANY river. Take it from a one-eyed golfer whose game is finally coming back. God is good. God is good, and He is worthy to trust even if it means your life.



David Slusher is director of Miller Library at Grand Rapids Baptist College and Seminary and assistant professor of theology at both the college and seminary. A Cedarville graduate, he holds the Master of Divinity and Master of Theology degrees from Grace Seminary and the Master of Library Science from Ball State University. He pastored a church in Dayton, Ohio, for two years.



Heartstring To Heaven

by Rebekah Coriell

Our first baby. Ron and I couldn't wait to see what God had in store for us. I felt so big. Maybe it would be a boy. Ron would probably like that. I have to confess, I wanted a little girl. But we would take either and hope that the baby was healthy.

Delivery day finally came with the beginning of my labor early one morning. We called the doctor and he told us to get dressed, have a casual breakfast, and come on in to the hospital. He would meet us and deliver the baby.

As Ron whisked me to the hospital, my thoughts were filled with joy and anticipation. I was so glad my husband would be there to hold my hand through delivery.

Upon our arrival I was taken for X-rays. The doctor discerned that our

baby was quite large, and he wanted to be sure there would be no complications.

I was disappointed to learn that there was a problem. He told me that my pelvic measurement was small and unable to deliver such a BIG baby naturally. That meant a dreaded C-section. Moreover, Ron would be excluded from the operating room, in spite of the fact that he had attended all the LaMaze classes.

I remember waving goodbye to Ron as the nurses wheeled me down the hall. Fear gripped my heart. My first operation, ever! I hoped it would be over soon. Then the baby moved, and I was reminded of the bundle of joy I would soon be holding.

The next thing I remember was waking from surgery. I was so groggy. But I managed to ask Ron, "What did we have?" He gripped my hand and said, "A daughter." But there was a sadness in his voice. "Our daughter is very special," he continued. I could not comprehend how such good news could come wrapped with any

sadness. Only after recovery did I comprehend the whole story.

"Honey," said Ron, "our baby has an enlarged head filled with fluid. The condition is called hydrocephalus. The doctor does not expect her to live for very long because she was born without the cortex or thinking part of the brain."

I was crushed. How could this happen to me? We had dedicated our baby to the Lord while she was in the womb. Ron and I were living for God. Why us, Lord?

Complications from my surgery soon set in. I was bedridden with tubes in my arm and my nose. Our baby was in the intensive care unit. The pediatrician advised us to not bother to see her. No need to bond with a baby you are going to lose. We were so naive. We believed him! Later, I felt ashamed of falling for such a humanistic reasoning.

Each day I braced myself for news that she had passed away. Then the morning came when all my tubing was removed. I

had freshened up when the surgeon arrived for her daily visit. We chatted and then she asked me, "Rebekah, when are you taking the baby home?"

"Taking the baby home?" I exclaimed. "You said she was dying! I haven't even seen her."

The doctor explained that the baby was stabilizing. She could no longer stay at the hospital. We should prepare for her to go home with the understanding that at any time I could find her blue in her bed or even dying in my arms. Babies with her special conditions have lived as long as nine months.

I burst into tears. Hadn't I gone through enough already? Inwardly, I knew I needed to turn to the Lord and cry out for the special wisdom and grace He promises for hard times. I didn't know my heart could hurt so deeply.

I began to read the Psalms. There I found God's encouragement for me. Psalm 18:30,31 stated, "As for God, His way is perfect. The Word of the Lord is proved. He is a shield to those who trust in Him."

One phrase jumped off the page. "The Word of the Lord is proved." Through my tears I told the Lord He was going to have to *prove* to me that He could carry me through this trial, for this was something I could not do in my own strength.

The anticipation of seeing our daughter for the first time was frightening. What would our hydrocephalic baby look like? I was glad Ron would be with me. We put on the special gowns and then she was wheeled over to me.

Her head was large, as large as an adult's. In fact, her skin was so tightly stretched that she could not close her eyes. But she was beautiful. I exclaimed, "Oh, Ron, she has my fingers and your ears!" Almost at first glimpse, we were bonding with our special daughter, the one God had made just for us.

We had not named her at this point. In light of the prediction that this child would not live, a friend had advised us not to use the name we had chosen. Instead, she encouraged us to trust the Lord for another child.

Amazingly, the nurses in the premie nursery had already named her Angel. Because her head was so large, soft, and heavy they would roll cloth diapers and form a ring or donut into which her head could rest. The effect resembled a halo. Hence the name. Because she was born in April, we chose the name Angel April Coriell.

We returned to my hospital room overjoyed and at the same time puzzled as to how we would manage Angel April at home.

I called Ron's mother and mine for help. We were shocked to learn that my

mom could not get time off from work and Ron's mother was having emergency surgery! Since Ron was teaching school, he would be home only a few hours a day.

Again, I needed to remind myself that God had promised peace, wisdom, joy, strength, and goodness to come through the trials He sends us.

It is hard enough for new parents to bring home a normal baby. Our task seemed impossible until our church stepped in with meals and assistance. Friends helped with shopping and baby sitting when I needed some rest. I understood in a whole new way the love of Christ when it was expressed through tangible acts such as these.

After several days Angel began vomiting and had to be readmitted to the hospital. When she stabilized a few days later, the doctor warned us that we would have to find another place for our baby as the hospital could not keep her. Furthermore, he said Angel was still too sick to come home.

What other place is there for such children? We didn't have a clue. The doctor suggested we return the next morning to pick up our child. That night Ron and I got down on our knees and cried out to God. Did He know of a place for Angel? He did.

Early the next morning we were awakened by a phone call. The doctor said Angel had taken a turn for the worse, and we needed to come immediately. When we arrived, he shared with us that Angel had passed away at five o'clock in the morning. Yes, God knew a place for our Angel. She was with the other angels.

The doctor asked permission to keep our daughter for a few days so that some tests could be run to help them with other children like ours. We said yes and left with a mixture of sorrow and relief.

It was Sunday morning, and we were dressed up, so we decided to do what we always do, go to church. We were hurting, and it would be good to have the family of God close by.

We could still make it for morning worship. We arrived just as the service was beginning. Not wanting to give sorrowful news and spoil anyone's worship, we waited in the car until after the opening hymn. Then we went in.

Guess where the usher had to seat us? Up front, of course! I suppose the Lord wanted no distractions to hinder the message He had for our hearts.

The soloist sang, "He giveth more grace when the burdens grow greater...." We needed that song.

Then came the message. A Mother's Day message. We had forgot-

ten what Sunday this was. But, we needed that message.

Then with the close of the service came the time once a year when all the new parents dedicated their babies to the Lord in a public way. So up to the altar, right in front of us, came a score of proud moms and dads with their cooing babes. WE DIDN'T NEED THAT!

But as I sat there, I thought over the events of the past weeks. I was reminded that God had supplied our every need. The words of the morning hymn had reminded me that burdens only multiply His grace to us. And our pastor's message made it clear to me that children are special gifts from God--gifts that would build His character in us. I felt an amazing peace as I sat in front of all those parents. They were holding their children. God was holding mine.

That was nearly 20 years ago. As I reflect upon those days, I am grateful to the Lord for choosing us to have such a special baby. Ron and I were drawn closer together, perhaps more quickly than usual for a young couple. We learned about the value of a church family as it had opportunity to express love corporately and in special, individual ways. We learned about funerals with the help of our wise pastor and how to spend appropriately. At Angel's memorial service the gospel was clearly presented to the unsaved friends with whom Ron taught.

Perhaps most wonderful was the fact that Heaven seems much more special to me. I have someone I love waiting for me there. A "heartstring to heaven."

Oh, one more thing. Our doctor told us that chances were high that I could have another special baby like Angel. What a fearful thought. And what if I never had another girl?

Today I am happy to testify that God does not operate according to chance. May I introduce you to my Jessica, Jennifer, and Johanna.



Rebekah Coriell and her husband Ron present popular seminars on parenting. They also co-authored a series of 24 booklets on character building and two books on the topic. She is a 1970 graduate of Cedarville College.

ITINERARIES

Dr. Paul Dixon, President

Lapeer, MI--Eastern Michigan Association, February 1
Canton, OH--Canton Baptist Temple, February 17
Memphis, TN--Association of Christian Schools International, February 21-22
Shelbyville, IN--McKay Road Baptist Church, February 24
Mt. Laurel, NY--Fellowship Baptist Church, March 2-3
Largo, FL--Starkey Road Baptist Church, March 8-10
Grand Ledge, MI--Grand Ledge Baptist Church, April 7
Dayton, OH--Washington Heights Baptist Church Senior Fellowship, April 9, 12 noon
London, Ont.--Muskoka Baptist Conference Banquet, April 11
Toronto, Ont.--Muskoka Baptist Conference Banquet, April 12
Dayton, OH--Emmanuel Baptist Church, April 17
Charleston, WV--Bible Center Church, April 21
Newport, NC--Grammercy School, April 26
Charleston, WV--Bible Center Church, April 28
Crawfordsville, IN--Indiana Fellowship of Regular Baptist Churches Men's Retreat, May 17-18
Erie, PA--Garden Heights Baptist Church, May 26

Dr. James T. Jeremiah, Chancellor

Auburn, IN--Bible Baptist Church, February 10
Hazel Park, MI--Tabernacle Baptist Church, April 27-28

MINISTRY TEAMS

Swordbearers

Circleville, OH--Logan Elm Baptist Church, February 3, p.m.
Petersburg, IN--Gospel Center, March 2,3, a.m.
Carmel, IN--Carmel Community Baptist Church, March 3, p.m.
Romeo, MI--First Baptist Church, March 17, a.m.
Oxford, MI--First Baptist Church, March 17, p.m.
Auburn Hills, MI--Oakland Christian School, March 18, a.m.
Milford, MI--First Baptist Church, March 18, p.m.
Pontiac, MI--Gingellville Community Church, March 19, p.m.
Ypsilanti, MI--Calvary Baptist Church, March 20, p.m.
Farmington, MI--Farmington Hills Baptist Church, March 21, p.m.
Livonia, MI--Berean Baptist Church, March 23, p.m.

Port Huron, MI--Griswold St. Baptist Church, March 24, p.m.
Vincent, OH--Lighthouse Baptist Church, April 7, a.m.
Gallipolis, OH--First Baptist Church, April 7, p.m.
Fort Wayne, IN--Shoaff Park Baptist Church, April 21, a.m.
Muncie, IN--Trinity Baptist Church, April 21, p.m.

Summer Swordbearers

Cincinnati, OH--Mariemont Community Church, February 2,3, a.m.
Waynesville, OH--First Baptist Church, February 3, p.m.
St. Paris, OH--Newsom Missionary Church, February 24, a.m.
Cable, OH--Jenkins Chapel, February 24, p.m.
Winchester, OH--Grace Bible Church, April 7, a.m.
Perrysville, OH--Vermillion Baptist Church, April 7, p.m.
Savanna, OH--Bethel Baptist Church, April 21, a.m.
Galion, OH--First Baptist Church, April 21, p.m.

Abundant Life Singers

Canton, OH--Maryland Ave. Baptist Church, February 2
Canton, OH--Whipple Ave. Baptist Church, February 3, a.m.
Copley, OH--Crusade Baptist Church, February 3, p.m.
Cedarville, OH--Music Showcase, Cedarville College, February 22
Fayette, OH--Ambrose Baptist Church, February 23
Pioneer, OH--Harvest Baptist Church, February 24, a.m.
Lima, OH--Grace Baptist Church, February 24, p.m.
Gallipolis, OH--Faith Baptist Church, April 7, p.m.

Kingsmen Quartet

Bluffton, OH--Ebenezer Mennonite Church, February 24, a.m.
Bowersville, OH--Bowersville Wesleyan Church, February 24, p.m.
Lakeland, FL--Heritage Baptist Church, March 16,17
Lakeland, FL--Lakeland Christian School, March 18, a.m.
Avon Park, FL--Bethany Baptist Church, March 18, p.m.
Hollywood, FL--Hollywood Christian School, March 21, a.m.
Punta Gorda, FL--Peace River Baptist Church, March 22, p.m.
Englewood, FL--Calvary Baptist Church, March 23,24, a.m.
Sebring, FL--Southside Baptist Church, March 24, p.m.
Brunswick, OH--Grace Baptist Church, April 7, a.m.

Tiffin, OH--Calvary Baptist Church, April 7, p.m.
Brownsburg, IN--Bethesda Baptist Church, April 20, 21, a.m.
Kettering, OH--First Baptist Church, April 21, p.m.

Summer Master's Puppets

North Manchester, IN--Manchester Bible Church, April 7, a.m.
Pandora, OH--St. John Mennonite Church, April 7, p.m.
Springfield, OH--Springfield Christian School, April 19
Wintersville, OH--Wintersville Baptist Church, April 20,21, a.m.
Upper Arlington, OH--First Community Chapel, April 21, p.m.

Master's Puppets

Xenia, OH--Greenwood Manor, February 6
Cedarville, OH--Fellowship, Cedarville College, February 17, a.m.
Jamestown, OH--Heathergreene Nursing Home, February 24, p.m.
Springfield, OH--St. John's Christian Church, February 27
Dayton, OH--Dayton Gospel Mission, March 10
Dayton, OH--Airway Baptist Church, April 14, a.m.

Lifeline Players

Cedarville, OH--SWAT Rally, Cedarville College, February 2
Columbus, OH--Clintonville Baptist Church, February 3, a.m.
Middletown, OH--Trinity Baptist Church, February 3, p.m.
Middletown, OH--Grace Baptist School, February 20
Columbus, OH--Memorial Baptist Church, February 23,24, a.m.
Marion, OH--Oak Knoll Baptist Church, February 24, p.m.
Columbus, OH--Berean Bible Church, March 2,3, a.m.
Wilmington, OH--Immanuel Baptist Church, March 3, p.m.
Willowick, OH--Erieside Church, March 16
Bedford, OH--Bible Baptist Church, March 17, a.m.
North Madison, OH--Bible Baptist Church, March 17, p.m.
Cleveland, OH--Baptist Christian School, March 19, a.m.
Westlake, OH--Grace Baptist Church, March 19, p.m.
Kent, OH--Grace Baptist Church, March 20, p.m.
Wadsworth, OH--Fellowship Baptist Church, March 21, p.m.
Grafton, OH--Midview Baptist Church, March 24, p.m.

CAMPUS NEWS



Cedarville's Wall of Prayer in the James T. Jeremiah Chapel is a focal point of prayer on behalf of U.S. troops deployed in the Persian Gulf. Members of the College and the Dayton community have supplied names of family members and friends in the military to be placed on the wall. **Cedarville TORCH** invites readers to send names also. The college family will pray for these individuals throughout the conflict.

New Scholarships

Prospective students and their parents will be glad to know about new no-need scholarships available for the 1991-92 school year.

The Achievement Scholarship (\$600-\$1,000) is based on high school GPA and ACT or SAT scores.

The Campus Life Scholarship (\$500 per year) is based on GPA, ACT or SAT scores, class rank and recommendation of the church.

The National Merit Scholarship (\$3,000 per year) is based on PSAT scores.

The Jack Wyrzten Scholarship (\$600-1,800), based on GPA, is awarded to graduates of Word of Life Bible Institute, School of Youth Ministries, or School of Missions and Evangelism.

Summer Studies Program invites high school students to earn college credit between their junior and senior years. Students whose parents are Cedarville graduates and who have a 3.0 GPA may be eligible for a \$500 scholarship. Eight classes are offered June 10-29, 1991.

These are just a few of the scholarship opportunities available for new students at Cedarville College. For more information, contact the Admissions Office at 1-800-777-2211 or the Financial Aid Office at 1-800-444-2433.

Music, Drama Use Alford Addition

The new 8,000-square-foot addition to Alford Auditorium is addressing current space needs of music and drama. Dr. Charles Clevenger, chairman of the Music Department, reported, "The new building houses a drama scene shop, dressing rooms, and rest rooms as well as a music rehearsal facility for vocal and instrumental groups. There are faculty studios and an electronic music computer lab."

The Alford addition is a temporary abode for the Music Department until a fine arts facility becomes a reality. After that time the building will continue to be used for drama activities as well as other classroom applications.

CDR Radio To Reach Columbus

CDR Radio, the Cedarville College FM station, plans to add translator service in Columbus, Ohio, sometime in 1991. CDR General Manager Paul Gathany said, "With this addition, CDR will serve a potential audience of almost three million listeners in two of the country's top 50 markets. Columbus will experience excellent reception, and the station will sign on soon after \$65,000 in project expenses is received."

CDR presently provides evangelistic messages, Bible teaching, and Christ-honoring music to the greater Dayton/Springfield area, Chillicothe, Portsmouth, Wheelersburg, and Washington Court House, Ohio; and Richmond, Indiana.

Engineering Off To A Good Start

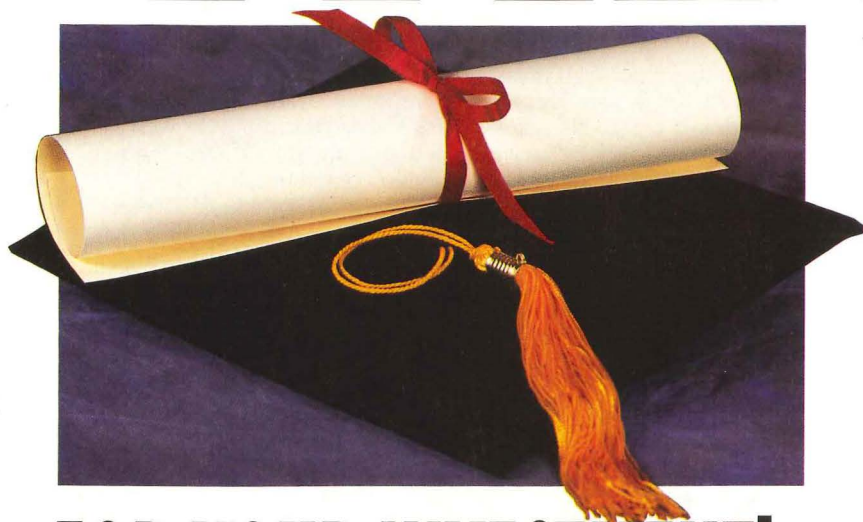
Cedarville's four-year engineering program leading to bachelor of science degrees in electrical and mechanical engineering began fall quarter. Designed according to ABET standards, Cedarville's engineering program benefits from an advisory board of leading engineers, executives, and engineering educators. In keeping with current engineering education trends, Cedarville offers design projects and CAD (computer assisted design) experiences at the freshman level.

The young engineering program already has a close association with the SAE professional engineering society. Cedarville's student organization numbers 42, the largest in the Dayton area. This year, Cedarville students are involved in two SAE national student design competitions and participated in SAE's national convention in Detroit in February.

Cedarville president Dr. Paul Dixon says of the program, "It is producing engineers who come from a liberal arts background within a Christian context. For years, prospective employers have actively recruited our graduates because they recognize their strong work ethic and moral standards as well as their fine academic preparation. I project that our engineering graduates will have the same attraction."

CEDARVILLE COLLEGE

VALUE...



FOR YOUR INVESTMENT! Discerning parents and students are increasingly concerned about the value they will receive for their college investment. And no wonder. Costs at many colleges have escalated.

Surprisingly, a Cedarville College education costs much less than that of most accredited private colleges and just slightly more than public universities. In fact, adjusted for inflation, Cedarville's costs are the same as they were when your high school student was born. We offer a variety of financial aid options, work opportunities on campus, and payment programs that can fit college expenses into a family budget. Yes, it's reasonable to attend Cedarville. And consider what you get for your money.

Outstanding career preparation. "Big Six" accounting firms as well as corporate giants like Glidden are among the dozens of companies, hospitals, schools, and agencies that recruit Cedarville students. Our alumni have excelled at such prestigious graduate schools as the University of Notre Dame School of Law, The Ohio State University School of Medicine, and Cambridge University in England.

Opportunities for spiritual growth. Chapel every day, weekly ministries, godly professors as guides and role models, and many new Christian friends in a family atmosphere. Your student will be both well-rounded and well-grounded.

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